

June 20, 2006 CPC



STAFF'S
REQUEST ANALYSIS
AND
RECOMMENDATION

06PR0312

Bogese Companies
(River Forest Retail Center)

Bermuda Magisterial District
Southeast of Ironbridge Road and Branders Creek Drive

REQUEST: Site plan approval.

Bogese Companies requests Planning Commission approval of a site plan for an approximately 31,000 square foot retail/office center.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the site plan and the associated architectural design per the following Condition for the following reason:

All site plan requirements except architectural compatibility have been achieved with the proposed site plan. The proposed architecture is not sufficiently compatible with the existing shopping design as required by Condition 7 of schematic plan Case 89PS0173. With the one (1) condition proposed by staff below, the architecture can achieve the intent of architectural compatibility.

CONDITION

The upper portion of the building above the awnings shall be of similar masonry construction and masonry color as the existing shopping center. (P)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Associated Public Hearing Cases:

89PS0173 – Schematic Plan for The Baird Tract
89SN0110 – Ironbridge Properties, II, L.P.

Providing a FIRST CHOICE community through excellence in public service

Developer:

Bogese Companies

Design Consultant:

Site Engineering – Townes Site Engineering
Architecture – Freeman Morgan Architects

Location:

Southeast of Ironbridge Road and Branders Creek Drive. Tax ID 777-653-9412 (Sheets 25 and 26).

Existing Zoning and Land Use:

C-5; Vacant

Size:

5.5 acres

Adjacent Zoning and Land Use:

North - C-5; Vacant
South - C-5; Commercial
East - C-5; Commercial
West - R-MF; Single family residential, O-2; Vacant and C-5; Public/semi-public

BACKGROUND

The applicant requests site plan approval by the Planning Commission due to staff's response that the architecture is not compatible with the existing shopping center. Architectural compatibility is required by Condition 7 of schematic Case 89PS0173 as follows:

"All buildings within each zoning classification of this project shall be architecturally compatible."

While the bank and restaurant on the outparcels abutting Route 10 are not considered architecturally compatible, both are visually separated from the large scale shopping center building due to the shopping center's extensive parking area. The proposed building is a large-scale building that is in-line with the existing shopping center, and there will be a future in-fill building that will tie the proposed building to the shopping center in an "L" shaped design. The proposed architectural design submitted by the applicant is not architecturally compatible with the existing center. Compatibility is achieved through similar massing, scale, materials, color and specific architectural detailing. While the scale is similar, the lack of other similarities between the proposed and existing buildings visually disconnects the two (2) buildings as though

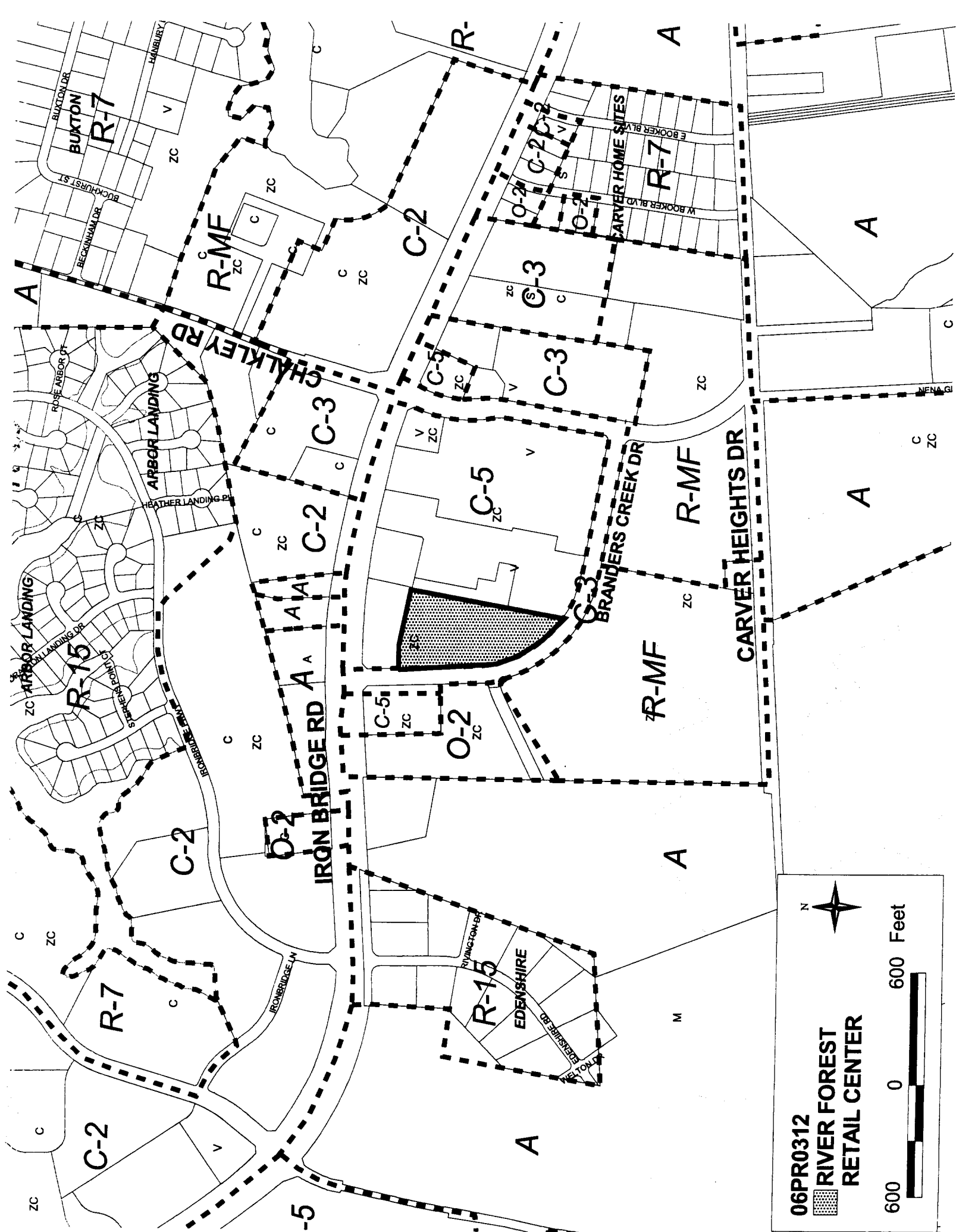
they are two (2) separate projects. The future in-fill building between the existing and proposed building will only further establish the appearance that the new buildings ignore the design of the existing shopping.

Staff recognizes that the existing shopping center has some unusual design elements with the large towers having blue roofs, and the overall appearance is somewhat dated as typically occurs with buildings that do not have a well-defined architectural style. When confronted with buildings of this type, it is possible to update the overall appearance of a project by allowing new buildings to introduce more contemporary design concepts. This is best accomplished by carrying a primary material and color into the new buildings so that a strong visual tie is maintained while allowing the new building to offer a more contemporary design. When the future in-fill building is constructed, the primary material and color is continued so that there is a clear visual connection between all three (3) buildings. By allowing the new building some flexibility to achieve a more contemporary appearance, staff can work with the existing shopping center owners if they wish to make any upgrades based on the new design of the new buildings.

Staff recommends a condition that will ensure the primary building material and color from the existing center is used in the most visible part of the new building's facade (above the blue-striped canopies). Without this condition, staff believes that the ministerial duty to achieve architectural compatibility is not being met. Without this condition, both the schematic plan needs to be revised, and a development standard waiver to the current Ordinance requirement for architectural compatibility is required.

CONCLUSIONS

The site plan has been through three (3) complete reviews by the site plan review staff and all requirements except architectural compatibility have been met. With implementation of the one (1) condition recommended by staff, the ministerial duty to achieve architectural compatibility will be sufficiently accomplished. The benefits of the one (1) condition allow visual compatibility between existing and future buildings while promoting an overall upgrade in appearance to the entire shopping center over time. With the one (1) condition, staff recommends approval.



06PR0312

RIVER FOREST
RETAIL CENTER



600 0 600 Feet

